

S-303,529



The 'Committee for Concerned Students' outpost at UB's Norton Union
... from the seeds of discontent, a new crop

Students Rap UB's CIA Ban

Posters announcing the right to free speech for everyone and voices over loudspeakers asking that "all have the right to be heard" filled the lobby of Norton Hall Monday at the University of Buffalo in a kind of "backlash" demonstration.

Students there are protesting what they call the "intimidation of the administration by minority groups." The students, feeling they represent the majority on campus, are criticizing a recent administrative decision to ban certain groups from interviewing on campus.

Antiwar Gesture

The seeds of discontent were planted last week when the administration banned CIA and Dow Chemical Co. representatives from visiting UB. The decision was based on a protest made by several minority groups as an antiwar gesture. Dow manufactures napalm used in the Vietnam War.

Their protest caused a counter-protest with a group of students organizing last Friday as the Committee for Concerned Students (CCS).

Charges Suppression

The committee members feel that the administration is suppressing freedom of speech by banning the representatives. Their circulated petition read:

"We feel that it is an abrogation of the freedom of all legally represented groups, regardless of

the political commitment. If any such groups are heard, let all be heard."

One poster summed up the committee's attitude: "We don't defend CIA and Dow — we defend their right to be heard."

Says Rights Disregarded

Ken Becker, a sophomore, spoke for the committee. "We feel the administration gave in to minority groups on campus under the threat of violence if Dow and the CIA came here. This means that 'might makes right,' and this is wrong.

"Barring these groups is an infringement on the rights of the majority of students who might wish interviews with their representatives."

Dick Smeeding, a sophomore, said "I wanted to talk to men from the CIA, but now I can't."

Official Agrees

C. James Lafkiotes, director of the University Job Placement Center, said he agreed with the demonstrators. "I am in sympathy, and I think the administration is in sympathy also."

"But they called off the interview because of fear of rioting and physical harm. Maybe now we'll get a strong policy endorsed by the students and faculty to prevent violence," he said.

Student-Faculty Support

The CCS has gained support from several professors in philosophy, chemistry and geography departments. Many in-

structors made the issue the topic of class discussion Monday.

Student support consisted of more than 900 signatures on the committee's petitions in only a few hours. These papers will be sent to the administration, and a student and faculty referendum will be proposed.

Underlying Concern

The concern of the students seems to be running deeper than the immediate issue, however. Several demonstrators said they felt their committee represented a "backlash" against radical, minority groups.

Dick Wachtel, president of the CCS, said "a lot of American students are tired of activist groups."

Richard Stec, a senior, said the protest is indicative of the consensus that American students are tired of being stereotyped as radicals. "We just needed someone to pick up the ball and carry it," he said.

Reacts to Stereotypes

Smeeding said he was sick of people thinking all UB students are "leftist."

Wachtel said his group would disband when the present issue is settled. "But if something else comes up that arouses us, something else that we feel is tyranny of the minority over the majority, we'll form again," he said.

The committee will seek petition signatures today and Wednesday.